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Comment:



Cuba-Mexico Are Working a Double Play

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Fidel Castro's front-paged threats to shoot at U. S. surveillance planes, and his attempt to involve the United States in the UN, are paralleled by a behind-scenes Mexican move to weaken hemisphere action against Cuba.

Latin American diplomatic sources report that Mexico is pushing a move to dismiss Venezuela's charges of subversion against Cuba with a mere "moral condemnation".

With an indictment of Cuba already taken up by the Organization of American States, Venezuela wants an early meeting of OAS foreign ministers held, with a complete hemisphere

break in relations with Cuba: the minimum expected out of it.

CENSURE?

Mexico, in contrast, is suggesting quietly that the OAS Council in Washington should deal with the matter. The most the Council could do is "censure" Cuba.

The Cuban-Mexican double-play is aimed primarily at the United States, Latin Americans believe.

They know that President Johnson's Latin American Coordinator, Thomas C. Mann, would like to see the Venezuela request succeed. But some State Department officials do not agree with the Mann policy.

Cuba's threats to start new trouble with the U. S. can be used by the latter in opposing the Mann line, saying that it "threatens peace".

Mexico, long a co-leader with Brazil of the pro-Castro Latin American bloc, has been thrust into sole leadership of it by the recent anti-communist revolution in Brazil.

Mexico's position today is paradoxical, because the country's internal policies have been increasingly anti-communist since Castro took over in Cuba.

Dr. Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, candidate to succeed President Adolfo Lopez Mateos in Mexico's forthcoming elections, was severe in dealing with communist agitation during his tenure as President Lopez Mateos' Interior Minister.

HAND-PICKED

Mexico's presidents are chosen by leaders of the Party of the Institutionalized Revolution, which monopolizes electoral power in Mexico.

Dr. Diaz Ordaz's nomination for the presidency was stoutly opposed by the PRI's far-leftist, pro-Cuban faction, led by former president Lazaro Cardenas.

It was learned that President Lopez Mateos and his hand-picked candidate, Dr. Diaz Ordaz, are at present disposed to support Cuba internationally as an election-year sop to the Cardenas faction.

With its Cuban relations preserved intact, Mexico has been a chief avenue thru which machinery parts and other supplies desperately needed by Cuba have been contrabanded from the U. S. to Castro's island.

Reliable sources say that a Mexican company—partly owned by Americans—recently sold to the Soviet Union a million tons of sulphur which will be transferred to Cuba for use in that country's sugar refining industry.